

CLAIMS:

1. A method of accessing or receiving information stored in electronic or other form,
5 the method comprising the use of alpha-numeric codes,
wherein the codes comprise one or more alpha-numeric sub-codes in a hierarchical structure and wherein the sub-codes and/or codes are used to identify, describe, define, classify or encode a description of the content of said information.
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2. A method according to claim 1, wherein a code comprising n sub-codes provide for n levels in the hierarchical structure.
3. A method according to claim 1 or 2, wherein the sub-codes are
15 numeric.
4. A method according to claim 1 or 2, wherein said sub-codes comprise a two digit code.
- 20 5. A method according to any of claims 1 to 4, wherein all of said sub-codes have the same data structure.
6. A method according to any of claims 1 to 5, wherein the codes include a sequence of one or more of said numeric or alpha-numeric sub-codes.
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7. A method according to any of claims 1 to 6, wherein said codes are stored together with links in electronic or other form, said links being usable for accessing or receiving said information.
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8. A method according to any of claims 1 to 7, wherein the sub-codes and/or codes are used to navigate to desired or associated links or information.

5 9. A method according to any of claims 1 to 8, wherein each of the sub-codes at each level of the hierarchical structure is associated with a certain subject-term.

10 10. A method according to any of claims 1 to 9, wherein the codes consist solely of a combination of said sub-codes.

11. A method according to any of claims 1 to 10, wherein information assigned a particular code relates either:

- 15 i) to the subject-term associated with said particular code if the code includes a single sub-code; or
- ii) to all subject-terms associated with all sub-codes of said particular code if the code includes more than one sub-code.

20 12. A method according to any of claims 1 to 11, wherein one or more of said codes are distributed together with information and/or products.

13. A method according to any of claims 1 to 12, wherein an indexing function is provided at each level of said hierarchical structure.

25 14. A method according to claim 13, wherein at each level of said hierarchical structure data related to subject-terms associated with the sub-codes are available upon entering a particular sub-code.

30 15. A method according to any of claims 9 to 14, wherein one or more of the sub-codes are converted into the associated subject-terms.

16. A method according to any of claims 1 to 15, wherein codes complemented by subject-terms are used to search for, access or receive information.

5 17. A method of navigating in a database or a network of databases, the method comprising the use of codes,

wherein the codes include one or more numeric or alpha-numeric sub-codes in a hierarchical structure, and wherein the sub-codes and/or codes are used to identify, describe, define, classify or encode a description of the
10 content of said information,

and wherein a code of n sub-codes is used to navigate to level n in the hierarchical structure.

18. A method of storing links in electronic or other form,
15 the method comprising storing the links to information associated with said codes,

wherein the codes include one or more numeric sub-codes in a hierarchical structure and wherein the sub-codes and/or codes are used to identify, describe, define classify or encode a description of the content of
20 said information.

19. A method of structuring links stored in electronic or other form,

the method comprising storing the links to information associated
25 with said codes,

wherein the codes include one or more numeric sub-codes in a hierarchical structure and wherein the sub-codes and/or codes are used to identify, describe, define classify or encode a description of the content of
30 said information

20. A method of retrieving or receiving information from a database or a data network using the methods according to any of claims 1 to 19.

5 21. A method of encoding information, the method comprising encoding information into numeric or alpha-numeric codes, wherein the codes include one or more numeric or alpha-numeric sub-codes in a hierarchical structure.

10 22. A method according to any of claims 17 to 21, wherein a code comprising n sub-codes provide for n levels in the hierarchical structure.

 23. A method according to any of claims 17 to 22, wherein the sub-codes are numeric.

15 24. A method according to any of claims 17 to 23, wherein said sub-codes comprise a two digit code.

 25. A method according to any of claims 17 to 24, wherein all of said sub-codes have the same data structure.

20 26. A method according to any of claims 17 to 25, wherein the codes include a sequence of one or more of said numeric or alpha-numeric sub-codes.

25 27. A method according to any of claims 17 to 26, wherein said codes are stored together with links in electronic or other form, said links being usable for accessing or receiving said information.

28. A method according to any of claims 17 to 27, wherein the subcodes and/or codes are used to navigate to desired or associated links or information.

5 29. A method according to any of claims 17 to 28, wherein each of the sub-codes at each level of the hierarchical structure is associated with a certain subject-term.

10 30. A method according to any of claims 17 to 29, wherein the codes consist solely of a combination of said sub-codes.

31. A method according to any of claims 17 to 30, wherein information assigned a particular code relates either:

- 15 i) to the subject-term associated with said particular code if the code includes a single sub-code; or
- ii) to all subject-terms associated with all sub-codes of said particular code if the code includes more than one sub-code.

20 32. A method according to any of claims 17 to 31, wherein one or more of said codes are distributed together with information and/or products.

33. A method according to any of claims 17 to 32, wherein an indexing function is provided at each level of said hierarchical structure.

25 34. A method according to claim 33, wherein at each level of said hierarchical structure data related to subject-terms associated with the sub-codes are available upon entering a particular sub-code.

30 35. A method according to any of claims 17 to 34, wherein one or more of the sub-codes are converted into the associated subject-terms.

36. A method according to any of claims 17 to 35, wherein codes complemented by subject-terms are used to search for, access or receive information.

5 37. A method according to any of claims 1 to 36, wherein the code is complemented by a suffix or a prefix.

38. A method according to claim 37, whereby the suffix is used as a filter or to provide additional information.

10 39. A method according to claim 38, whereby the suffix includes one or more additional subject terms or sub-codes or symbols.

40. An apparatus for performing a search on a database or a network of databases, the apparatus being adapted to perform any of the methods according to claims 1 to 39.

41. A database or a network of databases adapted to perform any of the methods according to claims 1 to 39.

20 42. A computer program adapted to perform any of the methods according to claims 1 to 39 when being executed on a computer.

25 43. A system for accessing information stored in a database or network of databases, the system comprising a terminal for entering said codes according to any of claims 1 to 39.